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Letter dated 5 December 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the final report of the Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Meeting to review the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which was held in Port of Spain from 6 to 10 October 2003 (see annex). At the request of Caribbean small island developing States participating in the above-mentioned Meeting and on their behalf, I have the honour to request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 94 (d).

(*Signed*) Philip R. A. **Sealy**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 5 December 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

REPORT OF THE CARIBBEAN REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING TO REVIEW THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 4

Achievements and continuing challenges to the implementation of the BPOA in the Caribbean region 6

- Climate change and sea level rise 6
- Natural and environmental disasters 7
- Management of waste 8
- Coastal and marine resources 9
- Freshwater Resources 10
- Land Resources 10
- Energy Resources 11
- Tourism Resources 12
- Biodiversity Resources 12
- Communication and Transport 13
- Science and Technology 13
- National institutions and administrative capacity 14
- Regional institutions and technical cooperation 15
- Capacity Building 15
- Other Institutional issues 17

New and Emerging Issues 17

- Security 17
- Trade 18
- Health 20
- Culture 21
- Poverty 21
- Partnerships 22

Introduction

1. The Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting to Review the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (BPOA) was held in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago during October 6–10, 2003.

2. The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago hosted the Meeting, with generous support from the Governments of Denmark and New Zealand.

3. The meeting was opened by Senator the Honourable Rennie Dumas, Minister of Public Utilities and the Environment of Trinidad and Tobago. The Chairman of the Alliance of Small Island States, His Excellency Ambassador Jagdish Koonjul, delivered a keynote address. The meeting elected Mr. Anthony Bartholomew, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment of Trinidad and Tobago as Chairman, Mr. Christopher Corbin of Saint Lucia and Ms. Rhoda Jackson of the Bahamas as Vice-Chairs, and Ms. Jacqueline DaCosta of Jamaica as Rapporteur.

4. The following Caribbean SIDS were represented[1]: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Netherlands Antilles, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States Virgin Islands. The Dominican Republic and Montserrat were unable to attend.

5. The Commission of the European Communities, Finland, Germany, Japan, Mauritius, Mexico, the United Kingdom and the United States attended the meeting in an observer capacity.

6. The following international, regional and national organizations were represented: Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), Association of Caribbean States (ACS), the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), CARICAD, the Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM), CARIFORUM Cultural Support Fund, Caribbean Industrial Research Institute, Caribbean Development Bank, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA), Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology, Caribbean Meteorological Organization, Caribbean Programme for Adaptation to Climate Change, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Labour Organization, the

[1] When the report refers to "the meeting", this reference should be considered as relating to these Caribbean SIDS, insofar as the Associate Members of ECLAC are enabled to make such decisions.

International Maritime Organization, International Organization of la Francophonie, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, the International Telecommunications Union, the Organization of American States, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), the Pan American Health Organization, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Small Island Developing States Information Network (SIDSNet), the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Forum on Forests, the World Meteorological Organization, the University of Malta, the University of the Virgin Islands, the University of the West Indies, Institute of Marine Affairs (Trinidad and Tobago), National Emergency Management Agency of Trinidad and Tobago.

7. The following organizations representing civil society were also represented: the Barbados Association of NGOs, the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action, the Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA), Coalition for Community Participation in Governance, Eastern Caribbean Coalition for Environmental Awareness, Environmental Commission of Trinidad and Tobago, the Humane Society of the United States, Iwokrama Rainforest Programme, the Cropper Foundation, Tumbasson Improvement Association, the Trust for Sustainable Livelihoods, Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development (CNIRD) and the Women Environment and Development Organization.

8. The meeting heard comprehensive presentations on national assessment reports, where complete, and overview presentations where reports were yet to be completed, describing achievements in sustainable development in the Caribbean region, continuing challenges to the implementation of the BPOA and new and emerging issues. The meeting also explored ways and means to improve regional cooperation.

9. Valuable contributions from the international organizations represented were received. The meeting took note of the ECLAC reports "Review of the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS in the Caribbean Sub-region 1994-2003" (LC/CAR/G.749 and 750).

10. The continued validity of the BPOA as a policy framework guideline for the sustainable development of SIDS was reaffirmed, as was the need to address new and emerging issues, which pose a challenge to sustainable development. There was also expressed a need to give more in-depth and focused attention to issues already within the BPOA.

11. The meeting further recognized the importance and successes of sub-regional mechanisms such as those contained in the OECS St. George's Declaration and Principles for Environmental Sustainability, the OECS Regional Environment Strategy and OECS Development Charter and Strategy, which have been developed to facilitate more effective implementation of the BPOA at a sub-regional level.

12. The meeting agreed that the enhancement of the quality of life of peoples, including their health, well-being and safety, as called for in the BPOA, must remain at the heart of the sustainable development aspirations of SIDS. Taking into account the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities it was agreed that implementation of the BPOA, Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), the Monterrey Consensus, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the other internationally agreed development goals required enhanced support and the mobilization of resources from the international community, and renewed action, through common and innovative strategies, by SIDS themselves at the national and regional levels.

13. There was full and comprehensive discussion on the vulnerability of SIDS. A panel of experts led consideration of the perspectives and issues regarding vulnerability as well as proposals for strengthening resilience and adaptation.

14. The Governments of Cyprus and Malta were congratulated on the progress of their accession to the European Union and they were invited to consider the inclusion of SIDS projects in their future development assistance portfolios. Their support in promoting SIDS as one appropriate focus for the regional programming of European Development Fund support under the Cotonou Agreement was invited.

15. Delegations acknowledged the support received from UNDP, UNEP and the Commonwealth Secretariat toward completion of the National Assessment Reports, and the commitment by UNEP to finance the regional synthesis report, and also acknowledged the offers of support presented by international and regional organizations at the meeting. UNEP support for the convening of the Caribbean civil society consultations held in Trinidad and Tobago from 3 to 5 October 2003, and for the development of the Caribbean Environment Outlook was also acknowledged.

16. Delegations also expressed their gratitude to the Government and People of Trinidad and Tobago for the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality.

Achievements and continuing challenges to the implementation of the BPOA in the Caribbean region

Climate change and sea level rise

17. Climate change and sea-level rise remain issues of serious concern to the region. Caribbean SIDS have made some progress in preparing for adaptation to the challenges of climate change, sea level rise and climate variability. However, it is recognized that in the global context it is imperative that members of the international community ratify the Kyoto Protocol; honour commitments made and play a greater role in supporting the efforts of SIDS.

18. The meeting recognized the achievements of the two major regional climate change projects and of national enabling activities, which have resulted in a better understanding of climate change impacts in the region. Furthermore, the meeting noted the establishment of the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre and the policy decision to expand that centre into a sustainable development centre as an example of the serious engagement of the region to address sustainable development and the impact of climate change.

19. The meeting acknowledged that in order to build resilience there is a need to:

- seek the assistance of the international community for its development of climate change models at scales appropriate to SIDS, so as to afford them support in planning for adaptation to climate change, current models having been deemed inappropriate;
- mainstream adaptation to climate change into various sectors, in particular agriculture, fisheries, health and water resources management;
- incorporate climate change adaptation concerns in national sustainable development plans;
- improve public education and awareness of climate change issues in the region;
- seek collaborative relationships to foster continued research on the impact of and adaptation to climate change and to facilitate wider dissemination and use of this research;
- pursue partnerships with the insurance sector to provide incentives for financing retrofitting of existing structures and design of new structures based on vulnerability reduction measures;
- improve access to, and transfer of, environmentally sound technology related to climate change by, inter alia, assessment of technology needs, identification of barriers to technology transfer, improvement of enabling environments for technology transfer and the identification of capacity related needs to facilitate technology transfer;
- maximise the region's access to and use of the Clean Development Mechanism, when it enters into effect, in order to promote renewable energy and achieve substantial technology transfer;
- mobilise resources at the regional and international levels for adaptation.

Natural and environmental disasters

20. The Caribbean SIDS remain extremely vulnerable to natural and man-made disasters and scarce resources continue to be diverted from other social, economic and infrastructure programmes to respond to these disasters. Most Caribbean SIDS now have draft disaster management policies and programmes and some have developed hazard mitigation policies and have sought to include these measures into their national development plans. There has been an improvement in the early warning system of the region. In addition, a more coordinated regional approach to disaster management and recovery has been developed.

21. However, there is need for more detailed research on the complex nature of vulnerability. Integrated development planning, completion of the work on vulnerability indices, capacity development and resources are all urgent requirements. The meeting acknowledged some progress in these areas, and proposed that programmes be enhanced to address vulnerability mapping for integration into sustainable development plans, building codes and legislation. The need for international support in this regard was emphasized.

22. Frequent recurrences of natural disasters, small size and limited bargaining capacity have resulted in the increased cost of insurance and re-insurance in SIDS. Access to affordable insurance and re-insurance schemes is considered integral to building resilience in disaster prone SIDS. The BPOA proposed that attention be given to this issue, and the Caribbean SIDS recalled that assistance from a major international financial institution to address this issue had been requested since the mid-1990's. The meeting recommended that the issue of insurance and re-insurance be again highlighted and that an appropriate international institution be identified to undertake a feasibility study on cost-effective and affordable facilities that could be made available for SIDS.

Management of waste

23. A number of SIDS reported on efforts to establish solid waste entities, improve waste collection, convert dumps into sanitary landfills, and on their progress in the implementation of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL 73/78) and other relevant conventions. Recycling initiatives have been hampered by financial constraints and limited scope for economies of scale. A regional approach to recycling was recommended. Implementation of Annex 3 standards under the LBS Protocol was also adjudged a significant challenge. Some central and other sewage facilities have been developed, but proper treatment and disposal systems are costly. However, the costs of not implementing the standards required by the LBS Protocol should be taken into account since this would have bearing on sustainable tourism and on the protection of the Caribbean Sea. The meeting expressed concern at the unresolved issue regarding the transhipment of nuclear waste through the Caribbean Sea, and the threat posed by such shipments. The meeting reaffirmed that the most acceptable solution is the cessation of nuclear waste shipments through the region's waters. The meeting also recommended that regional mechanisms to protect the oceans and coastal areas from ship-generated waste, oil spills and the transboundary movement of toxic and hazardous material be strengthened, and where necessary developed, taking into account the need to implement the international maritime instruments relating thereto. There was also acknowledgement of a need to develop regional and national capacity to manage the generation and disposal of hazardous and special waste in SIDS. The meeting recommended the following:

- Information sharing;
- Consideration of best practices, including the OECS solid waste management strategy;
- Establishment of indicators and implementation of a system of monitoring at the national level;

- Evaluation of existing waste management systems in order to identify more SIDS-appropriate systems and models and where necessary to seek international assistance to develop SIDS-appropriate systems for recycling, waste minimisation and treatment, reuse and management;
- Resource mobilisation; and
- Public awareness including the promotion and implementation of community based management programmes.

Coastal and marine resources

24. The meeting welcomed the development of integrated coastal zone management policies and plans in some SIDS and the establishment of coastal zone units.

25. The Caribbean Sea, one of the most important semi-enclosed seas in the world, is the main resource linking Caribbean SIDS. Its fragile ecosystem, routinely exposed to heavy traffic for cargo and cruise tourism, demands a comprehensive scheme for its protection, to ensure its continued contribution to the sustainable development of the Caribbean SIDS and in particular to the sustainable livelihoods of coastal communities. Caribbean SIDS therefore continue to advocate the designation of the Caribbean Sea as a special area in the context of sustainable development, and have taken this concern to the United Nations General Assembly. The role assigned to the Secretariats of the ACS and ECLAC in addressing this matter was reaffirmed, as was the work being done in collaboration with institutions such as the Cropper Foundation, to provide the scientific basis for the management of the Caribbean Sea. In this regard, the Caribbean Sea Ecosystem Assessment Initiative was welcomed.

26. The meeting also recognized that other initiatives such as the Inter-regional project being promoted by the Secretaries-General of CARICOM, the Indian Ocean Commission and the Pacific Islands Forum on Oceans Governance for support as a partnership with the Canadian International Development Agency would assist in advancing the effort toward comprehensive management of the Caribbean Sea. The importance of completing the work on the mapping of Exclusive Economic Zones and depositing the charts with the United National Convention on the Law of the Sea Secretariat was underscored.

27. The database on marine resources developed by CARICOM is a successful venture of the region. The meeting also recognized the successes of the Meso-American Barrier Reef Systems Project and of the International Coral Reef Action Network, as examples of how the region can seek to protect this valuable resource, which is protecting the very fabric of island life. The meeting recommended:

- Appropriate legislation and enforcement and improved surveillance;
- The mobilisation of resources;
- Continued research, mapping and data collection of coastal and marine resources in the restoration and rehabilitation of damaged ecosystems
- Integration of policies on coastal zones with other policies, such as watershed management - from ridge to reef – for the benefit of all the communities;

- Development of capacity for the sustainable development and management of the oceans, particularly in the production of energy, such as Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC).
- The assurance that improvement in the livelihoods of coastal communities is explicitly addressed in coastal zone management processes, policies and practices;
- Continued support for ownership and control of marine resources by non-self-governing territories, consistent with consensus resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly;
- Continued support for regional and other collaborative arrangements, such as the International Coral Reef Initiative;
- The involvement of local coastal communities and balancing the needs of all stakeholders in the development and implementation of coastal zone policies, particularly in the development and sustainable management of marine protected areas.

Freshwater Resources

28. The meeting acknowledged some success in many Caribbean SIDS resulting from the implementation of watershed management policies. Many SIDS lack sound water infrastructure and adequate water management and distribution systems. Affordable access to water for all and protecting water quality remain important challenges. Limited public sector resources for the development of potable water supplies is being addressed increasingly through public-private partnerships. Therefore there is a need to strengthen regulation and monitoring to facilitate privatisation and to foster public awareness.

29. The meeting underscored the need for integrating water resources management with energy services. Sanitation and waste management was highlighted as a particular area where an integrated approach could enhance efficiency.

Land Resources

30. There is need for the further development and enhancement of geographic information systems. Most SIDS have taken a more integrated development approach towards land use planning, but there is continuing concern at the loss of agricultural land. Related issues include land tenure, land suitability and land use conflict, and the need to strengthen enforcement capacity as regards zoning. The meeting recommended that programmes be put in place to make land more affordable and accessible for local populations, especially for low-income groups.

31. Also acknowledged was the need to establish national authorities for administration and management of land and for watershed management, to address such issues as land degradation, soil erosion and desertification. In order to provide much needed expertise in these areas the meeting recommended that additional and relevant research and post-graduate programs in geographic information systems (GIS), natural resource management and forestry science be introduced at the regional tertiary level institutions. Nonetheless, proposals have not been forthcoming for funding

under the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) from some Caribbean SIDS. It is important for SIDS to maximize their access to available resources through the financial mechanism of the UNCCD and CBD. Noting the designation of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as a financial Mechanism of the UNCCD, Caribbean SIDS welcomed the opportunity to access GEF financial and technical resources to develop and implement projects to address land degradation, while calling for additional resources to enable them to complete their National Action Programmes (NAP). It was also noted that there needs to be an integrated approach to addressing the vulnerabilities of SIDS. The meeting therefore called for integrated action to combat desertification, climate change and other global environmental crises.

Energy Resources

32. Dependence on imported energy remains a principal challenge to sustainable economic development of Caribbean SIDS. For the majority of Caribbean SIDS, fossil fuel imports consume a significant percentage of foreign exchange earnings. Further, the use of these fossil fuels contributes directly to the degradation of the environment through pollution and increased emissions, and therefore is a significant factor in the economic and environmental vulnerability of Caribbean SIDS.

33. At the same time the potential in the region to develop vast renewable energy resources (biomass, hydro, ocean, solar and wind), and for geothermal energy was emphasised. The use of solar energy for domestic water heating and for hotels, and for community based projects, and the use of wind and hydropower and biomass sources such as bagasse have been successful in some SIDS, with niche industries have developed in some SIDS in the region. Energy efficiency and the further development of renewable energy is a major concern for most SIDS, as the cost of energy is a major impediment to sustainable development and economic growth. The meeting recommended:

- Regional cooperation for research and development for SIDS-appropriate applications of renewable energy and energy efficiency such as the Bagasse project in Cuba and Belize.
- Consideration of the establishment of national energy advisory committees;
- A study to review the impact of privatisation on electricity generation and distribution in SIDS;
- Accelerated implementation of energy efficiency initiatives and development of projects to utilize the abundant renewable energy resources and geothermal sources as viable alternatives to address prohibitive energy costs;
- Exploration of the possible use of regional development banks as facilitators for energy transfer;
- Consideration of the establishment of an international SIDS investment fund to finance investments in programmes towards energy efficiency, renewable energy and capacity for the development of energy services;
- Facilitation of broad based, targeted public awareness programmes aimed at promoting the use of renewable energy and energy efficient technologies.

Tourism Resources

34. Tourism remains an important sector for the region. It is a major foreign exchange earner and employer in most Caribbean SIDS. The region recognised the challenge of increasing the benefits, which accrue from the cruise ship industry, particularly through continued, enhanced cooperation among Caribbean cruise ship destinations. The meeting also recognized the important contribution of the yachting sector. The need to determine carrying capacity and limits to acceptable change with a view to guiding sustainable development in the tourism industry in the Caribbean SIDS was underscored. Continued support for ecotourism and other sustainable community based efforts was also emphasized, as was heritage, nature based and cultural tourism. The meeting recognized the ongoing efforts of regional organizations (ACS, UWI, Caribbean Tourism Organization and CAST) to promote sustainable tourism development in Member States.

Biodiversity Resources

35. SIDS are recognised for their biodiversity endemism. The coral reef and forest ecosystems were identified as the source of the majority of SIDS biodiversity. The designation of protected areas has largely been a success in the region, but the effective management of these areas has been hindered by a lack of adequate institutional, policy and legal frameworks. The loss of habitat was recorded as a continuing concern in the Caribbean. National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans have been developed but not fully implemented in many Caribbean SIDS. The meeting recommended:

- Further research in coral reef protection and regeneration and sustainable forestry;
- Improved management of mangrove and associated ecosystems, including sea grass beds so as to preserve their integrity;
- The establishment of trans-border or multi-national biodiversity and land and marine conservation areas in the region;
- Resource mobilisation;
- Development of measures to control and to the extent possible eradicate alien or modified organisms that may have adverse effects on biodiversity;
- Programmes for inventorying, documenting and assessing local biodiversity, as well as promoting regional cooperation in this matter;
- international support and SIDS-SIDS cooperation to develop the economic potential of local medicinal plants while ensuring the protection of intellectual property rights;
- promotion of wider appreciation of the true value of biodiversity for tourism, watershed management, agricultural development and the overall sustainability of SIDS;
- Research into existing natural resources for traditional and alternative use;
- Continued work to harmonise the reporting requirements of the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

Communication and Transport

36. The liberalization of telecommunications in Caribbean SIDS has presented both opportunities and challenges in the region. The small size of the markets has prevented maximisation of the full value of liberalization through scale economies.

37. Delegations underscored the need to examine the overall role played by information management and knowledge building in furthering the sustainable development of SIDS in the region, in view of the rapidly growing importance of information and communications technologies (ICTs) and their application in sustainable development.

38. Delegations also encouraged the support and use of ICT and community multimedia centres, ICT literacy, skills development, local content and applications in building knowledge based societies and bridging the digital divide, particularly in rural communities.

39. The meeting acknowledged the continued potential for ICT and the development of technology in the region. The meeting welcomed the adoption of the Connectivity Agenda for the Americas in 2001, and the CARICOM ICT/Connectivity Agenda 2003 and Platform for Action, as strategic approaches to the development of the ICT sector. The important work of the ITU and UNESCO in the region was also welcomed, and participation at the highest level in the World Summit on the Information Society encouraged.

40. The development by the ACS of a regional air transport agreement was welcomed. The need for rationalization of air services in the region was acknowledged. The need for consideration of improved land transport policies was also emphasized.

Science and Technology

41. Science and technology research was emphasized as a basic tool for sustainable development, which should be promoted. New advances in the pure and applied science research were recorded. Research projects in molecular biology, and biotechnology and in medical science were reported to be ongoing. Increased collaboration among tertiary institutions in the Caribbean and with those of other SIDS was encouraged. The importance of international support for the establishment of a regional research-funding agency was underscored.

42. The meeting recommended:

- Stronger emphasis on science and technology programmes in the curricula of both secondary and tertiary institutions in the region;
- Support for efforts to ensure that research, especially that extracted from local communities, benefits the sustainable development of those communities, and involves their participation;
- The strengthening of efforts to develop and enforce legislation on intellectual property at the national level to protect indigenous research;

- The design and enhancement of policies and regulations to ensure that foreign researchers and institutions provide to appropriate local agencies, national government and institutions, raw data gathered prior to the publication of their research;
- The promotion of greater synergy between academia and industry, to ensure and enhance the impact of science and technological development on industry initiative;
- The establishment of centres to promote and disseminate information on resources available for research from alternative funding sources such as foundations.
- Support for the establishment of a biodiversity centre at UWI, which would collaborate and share information with similar institutions in the region;
- Greater focus on energy in regional research projects;
- Greater utilization of SIDS - appropriate technology; and
- The establishment and maintenance of systems to protect against bio-piracy, including through the development of national and regional expertise.

43. Delegations also acknowledged the need for increased public awareness on the prevalence of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in the region.

National institutions and administrative capacity

44. While there has been the establishment of institutional frameworks for implementing and promoting sustainable development in many Caribbean SIDS, the meeting acknowledged the need to establish specific coordinating mechanisms where they do not exist and to enhance their effectiveness where they do exist, including through the provision of sufficient resources. The establishment of linkages to other relevant committees and entities and the assignation of responsibility for implementation of the BPOA to all ministries and stakeholders, was deemed the key to ensuring integrated planning for sustainable development. The meeting recommended:

- The establishment of formal sustainable development public education programmes;
- The introduction of sustainable development modules in the curricula of educational institutions at all levels;
- Facilitation of stakeholder involvement in national sustainable development institutions;
- Institutionalisation of public participation through broad-based consultation, representation on relevant national bodies, legislation and other processes;
- Improvement and sharing of best practices;
- Assistance should be provided by the Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development (CNIRD) for information dissemination and the establishment of formal contacts with Caribbean governments towards civil society's involvement in a regional technical task force.

Regional institutions and technical cooperation

45. It was agreed that a well-established, well-defined regional co-ordinated mechanism was needed for the further implementation of the BPOA in the region, taking into consideration the special circumstances of the Associate Members of ECLAC. In that regard, there was a need for careful review of the existing arrangement in the region for the implementation of the BPOA, with a view to its improvement.

46. It was therefore recommended that a group of experts be tasked with identifying within a given timeframe an appropriate and effective regional mechanism, in accordance with the guidelines and modalities as outlined below:

- Assessment of the capacity of Caribbean regional agencies in the delivery of sustainable development initiatives.
- Consideration of a regional co-ordinating mechanism founded on existing institutions/arrangements;
- Consideration of a mechanism which, in addition to co-ordinating activities in the Region in implementing the BPOA, would also serve to reduce duplication among regional agencies for scarce regional resources; enhance and encourage information-sharing and exchange of technical expertise among countries; identify synergies and close gaps.

Capacity Building

47. Delegations emphasized the need for capacity building within the region, including institutional capacity building, both within the State machinery as well as within civil society, and a data bank of national and regional institutions and experts to facilitate capacity development. NGO/government collaboration was also highlighted. Capacity building at the regional level was underscored. In this regard, SIDS/TAP was highlighted as a possible mechanism for advancing this effort. Its early operationalization was therefore encouraged.

48. Delegations also highlighted persistence of the practice within the region of hiring external 'experts' who were unfamiliar with the region and who did not build or use local capacity. The use of inappropriate technology transfer and tied aid in the region were also discussed with concern.

49. The migration of trained human resources from SIDS, particularly in specialised skills, was viewed as both a challenge and an opportunity. The need to address this brain drain to ensure the long-term capacity of Caribbean SIDS to achieve sustainable development was underscored.

50. The meeting recognized the need for governments in the region to embark upon widespread youth development. Youth were acknowledged to be an important and often ignored resource in the implementation of sustainable development strategies. Measures to actively involve, support and facilitate youth involvement in sustainable development initiatives were encouraged.

51. The marginalisation of young males in the education system of many Caribbean SIDS was highlighted. It was agreed that this phenomenon required urgent remedial attention.

52. Delegations also reaffirmed their commitment to gender equity and the recognition of the role and contribution of women to sustainable development as proclaimed in the section 3 of the Barbados Declaration, the BPOA and the JPOI.

53. In this regard, support for the CARICOM gender-mainstreaming plan of action, which focuses on education, HIV/AIDS and labour in the context of sustainable development, was reaffirmed.

54. The importance of strengthening language skills in the region was underscored. The use of Creole, indigenous or local and minority languages and traditional knowledge in the development and dissemination of sustainable development practices was also encouraged.

55. Access to increased resources for capacity building was identified as an urgent requirement. Delegations urged the support of the international community in this area.

56. The meeting recommended:

- An analysis of capacity building needs in the region, to be conducted by the appropriate tertiary institutions within the Region, with the UWI as the lead institution.
- Greater collaboration among the Universities and tertiary institutions in the region, in particular, across language zones (English, Spanish, French, Dutch), so as to ensure harmonization of efforts in the different language bands.
- The development, by all tertiary institutions, of more modular courses on specific issues in order to accommodate persons with time-constraints.
- The establishment of post-training database(s) to track expertise in the Region by keeping in touch with persons who receive training; e.g. utilizing the resources available at the UWI and /or utilizing software that allows for online registration by experts.
- Greater use of the SIDSNet website-both as a source of information for Caribbean SIDS and as an outlet for information about them, including information relating to the above recommendations. In this regard, Caribbean governments are urged to forward, to the facility, information on their focal points, in order to allow the SIDSNet to facilitate the information exchange among countries.
- Greater use of distance learning, including the extensive distance learning resources of the UWI and for governments and prospective sponsors of trainees to be more aggressive in approaching the University and other universities and tertiary institutes in the region to tailor programmes to specific needs.
- Pursuit of a greater share of capacity-building opportunities offered by donors including initiatives like UNDP's Capacity 2015 programme.
- Harmonisation of international donor contributions for capacity building for sustainable development in the region.
- Consideration be given to the establishment of a regional science and technology advisory panel as envisaged in the BPOA.

Other Institutional issues

57. The meeting recognized the need for mainstreaming and popularizing the SIDS message at the national and regional levels in particular, in order to more effectively advance the sustainable development agenda in a comprehensive way. The promotion of SIDS concerns at the international level was also highlighted as an urgent objective. Actions to be considered included:

- Strengthening political will, through fostering an increased awareness of and commitment to the sustainable development agenda on the part of the political decision-makers, and through increased advocacy in the international arena;
- Sensitizing key policy makers and the general public including marginalized groups using all available media (including grassroots community radio);
- Improving and increasing the status and level of participation of grassroots organizations and indigenous peoples in the process;
- Promoting wider civil society involvement and the fullest participation of youth in decision-making on sustainable development strategies at the community level, towards the advancement of people-centred development; and
- Formalisation of AOSIS structure, to strengthen the institutional infrastructure for advocacy for SIDS.
- Improved cooperation and coordination between regional bodies, UN representation, international and regional institutions and meetings. In this regard the meeting welcomed the establishment of a regional SIDSNet officer in the Caribbean, to be housed at UWICED, and recommended that SIDS focal points be established or enhanced in Caribbean SIDS.

New and Emerging Issues

58. Delegations agreed that issues within the BPOA could not be effectively addressed in a sectoral manner alone. Emphasis was therefore placed on the adoption of an integrated approach to the implementation of the BPOA. Delegations also acknowledged that since the adoption of the BPOA, significant new challenges had emerged which must be addressed as part of any effective strategy to achieve sustainable development.

Security

59. The meeting recognized that current international concern and focus on the military dimension of security was resulting in a diversion of resources from the development agenda. Delegations affirmed that security must be viewed in a multi-dimensional fashion, taking into consideration all possible threats including narco-trafficking, illegal trade in small arms and the related effects on crime and violence in local communities. It was also agreed that security issues should embrace matters related to human security, such as HIV/AIDS and poverty.

60. The importance of support from the international community to assist SIDS in meeting their obligations as regards implementation of the new international Maritime Security Regime, which comes into effect July 1, 2004, was underscored.

Trade

61. The meeting recognized the urgent need for greater transparency and inclusiveness in the international economic, financial and trading system, and called for a democratic and participatory approach in the process of setting international rules, codes, common norms and standards. Such an approach should ensure that the interests and concerns of all countries, irrespective of size and constitutional status, are fairly and equally served.

62. Delegations also expressed concern at the increased marginalisation of SIDS and small economies in the global economic, financial and trading system with the emergence of a globalized economy and the formation of regional and global trading blocs, and highlighted the need for more effective SIDS representation in the various trade negotiating fora to continue to make the case for special, differential treatment, given the openness of their economies and their inherent vulnerabilities, as well as the particular costs of adapting to climate change and sea level rise.

63. There was general agreement that trade impacts on all aspects of the sustainable development of SIDS.

Key issues:

- Market access and supply-side constraints
- Agriculture
- Commodities
- Forest products
- Services
- Trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS)
- Promoting economic diversification of the use of subsidies and incentives
- Tariff reductions
- Fiscal policy matters
- Trade, aid, debt and finance;
- Bio-safety and health
- Food security,
- Issues relating to trade in services, and government procurement; the so-called "Singapore Issues"

Delegations agreed that these issues should be addressed in an integrated development framework that recognizes the sustainable development goals of SIDS.

64. The meeting underscored:

- the need for clarity of trade policy objectives by international organizations in their treatment of SIDS and the Barbados Programme of Action;
- the importance of enhancing the active involvement and participation of SIDS in all issues relating to trade and recommended a collective approach to trade negotiations;
- Consideration of trade and trade-related policy issues which impact on SIDS significantly, and for which effective action must be taken to strengthen institutional infrastructure, particularly in the public sector;
- the need for coherence and synergies among international support mechanisms and the major initiatives such as Agenda 21, BPOA, the JPOI and the MDGs, as well as the outcomes of the Mauritius International Meeting.

65. The meeting noted that the decline in Caribbean market share of trade in goods and services has been directly linked to the timeframe for the removal of preferential arrangements. The meeting therefore underscored the need for greater flexibility and a longer timeframe for the implementation of the WTO arrangements.

66. Issues such as dumping, non-competitive practices and subsidies undermine the long-term prospects of SIDS to provide employment and generate income. Delegations therefore recommended that increased attention be given to building capacity in SIDS on a sub-regional or regional basis to deal with such issues, so as to prevent the undermining of SIDS' competitiveness and employment opportunities. It was recommended that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) be requested to provide assistance in this area.

67. The need for greater attention to be given to the environmental dimensions of trade was underscored. Delegations urged continued examination of the trade implications of MEAs such as:

a) the CBD Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
b) the Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC
c) the Stockholm Convention on persistent organic pollutants
d) and of other MEAs and the implications for the Cotonou Agreement.

68. The meeting recommended:

- Earliest consideration of strategies for confidence building on trade and environment, particularly as regards the relationship between developed and developing countries;
- Increased participation of SIDS representatives from both the trade and environment ministries in meetings such as those of the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment;
- Increased advocacy for more supportive measures in MEAs such as capacity building and technology transfer, financial resources and other incentives to achieve sustainable development in SIDS.
- The establishment of a regional TRIPS/Patent office in the Caribbean.

69. Mindful of the openness of Caribbean economies and the challenge to further integration within hemispheric and global trading systems, delegations reaffirmed the commitment of the CARICOM states to complete the creation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) by 2005 as a means of strengthening the resilience to economic vulnerability and mitigating the constraints of small size and limited resource endowment of individual states. In this regard they also took note of the Rose Hall Declaration on Regional Governance and Integrated Development adopted by the CARICOM Heads of Government in July 2003. Delegates called on the international community to fully support Caribbean member states in their efforts to establish the CSME by the 2005 deadline.

Health

70. Delegations recognised that the Caribbean faces significant challenges to the health of its people, and that this in turn challenges indigenous capacity for sustainable development in the region. The increase in communicable and lifestyle diseases in the Caribbean SIDS was highlighted as cause for major concern.

71. They also recalled the mandate of the CARICOM Heads of Government regarding the creation of the Caribbean Commission on Health and Development "to advocate, review and help propel health to the centre of the development process and to draw on the body of research and development that provides for evidence based decisions at all levels". This initiative along with the commitment to meet the Millennium Development Goals, anticipates additional investments in health to improve the lives of the poor and vulnerable.

72. The meeting therefore recommended:

- That even greater priority attention be given to the control and treatment of HIV/AIDS. The need to negotiate with pharmaceutical companies arrangements for the procurement of more economically priced generic drugs was highlighted;
- Regional cooperation in the procurement of drugs, which could result in significant reduction in the price;
- Increased promotion and dissemination of information on the availability of grants to support HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment and other health-related issues, such as that available to the Caribbean from Japan;
- That consideration is given to offering comprehensive health and peer sex education programme in all schools, including HIV/AIDS education.
- That consideration also be given to the implementation of programmes that encourage work-place policies to sensitize all employees to the HIV/AIDS issues, including measures to eliminate discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS.
- Support for more comprehensive education and public awareness programmes to deal with other health issues like malnutrition and other diseases;
- Closer examination of the Cuban health system as a model to be emulated. Concern was expressed that there is a lack of emphasis on prevention and education in national health strategies; there is need for a more people centred strategy.

- Greater attention to studies addressing food and nutrition in the Caribbean, including concerns regarding affordability and accessibility.

Culture

73. The meeting recognized the importance of culture in the development of the Caribbean region, as it represents the unique cultural expression and identity of the people; is the foundation of the richness of our cultural diversity, traditions and customs; and the basis for our spiritual and moral values. Culture is also the framework for and an effective tool in promoting sustainable development, that contributes to social cohesion, stability and the maintenance of peace and security. The Caribbean is known and respected for its contribution to the world culturally, most notably in music, the literary arts, food, Rastafarian religion and culture, and has produced many outstanding writers, artists and musicians.

74. Delegations also recognized the need to take action to protect the region's natural, tangible and intangible cultural heritage and intellectual property rights; to develop cultural policies; to bring focus to indigenous peoples; and to develop creative cultural industries in areas such as music, art, craft, the literary and culinary arts, fashion, festivals, theatre and film, which present significant economic opportunities for regional development.

75. The diversification of Caribbean economies, the enhancement of the tourism product, poverty reduction, and job creation through these innovative, indigenous industries is viewed as an indispensable component of any development strategy to assist Caribbean countries to make the necessary adjustments to survive in this globalized environment. Culture is also central to the development of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy, to promote the sense of community and identity that is essential to the effective implementation of the CSME.

76. The meeting therefore strongly recommended increased resource allocation for the development and strengthening of regional cultural initiatives as listed in Annex I of this report. In this regard the meeting requested that resources be made available to ensure the long-term sustainability of a cultural development fund for the region. The support of the international community in this effort was called for.

Poverty

77. Poverty remains a major obstacle to the sustainable development of the Caribbean region. The meeting called for:

- A regional approach to poverty surveys and the development of participatory mechanisms that offer more effective guidance in addressing poverty;
- The establishment of policies and frameworks to foster innovative partnerships for micro, small and medium enterprises, including the need to revitalize regional productive capacity and stimulate employment opportunities;

- Regional and national studies on the impact and relationship of policies at the national, regional and international level, and their impact on absolute and relative poverty.
- Analysis of best practices in getting information and communicating technologies to vulnerable groups and the poor as a means of enhancing their earning capacities and empowerment.

78. Delegations recorded concern that investment in housing was not keeping pace with population growth, resulting in a deficit in available housing. There was therefore a growing need to find affordable solutions. The meeting recommended that governments explore more innovative approaches such as public-private partnerships, self-help policies and other stakeholder partnerships in order to address this growing social problem.

Partnerships

79. The meeting emphasized that while the primary responsibility for sustainable development rests with national authorities of SIDS, the BPOA stresses the need for international partnership and support. The Caribbean SIDS therefore called for renewed effort in pursuit of partnerships to take account of the following imperatives:
- Public education and awareness programmes on sustainable development;
- Integration of sustainable development principles in all aspects of national development strategies, policies, legislation and regulation, programmes and projects;
- Integrated planning and decision making for sustainable development;
- Development and improvement of data collection systems to monitor progress in sustainable development, and indicators for sustainable development that are relevant to the scale and situation of SIDS,
- Mobilization of resources.

80. Delegations recognized that the possible range of cooperation for sustainable development was wide, with the potential involvement of all stakeholders within civil society and the public sector, and could be national, regional, inter-regional and international in scope. It was suggested that the private sector in particular be encouraged, through education and awareness programs, to embrace sustainable development strategies, and that public/private sector partnerships should thus be sought in strategic areas. In this regard the meeting recommended that early attention be given to the preparation of partnership proposals in the following areas:

- SIDS-SIDS partnerships;
- Hazard management and mitigation;
- Climate change data collection, analysis, information sharing, dissemination and design of regional models (CCCCC; NOAA; Hadley Center, UK; UWI; UNEP;)
- Research and promotion of the use of new and renewable sources of energy;
- Regional partnerships – promoting fiscal incentives;
- Health impacts of climate change (WHO, PAHO, CCCCC, UWI, CAREC, UNEP);
- The impacts of climate change on agriculture (FAO, CCCCC, CARDI, IICA, WMO, UNEP);

- Partnership to develop and realize the economic potential of cultural products (UNESCO, CARIFORUM Cultural Centres, along with regional and international organizations);
- the development, promotion and application of indigenous/traditional knowledge and products in SIDS including the development of intellectual property rights protocols and legal frameworks (WIPO, IWOKRAMA, indigenous communities);
- Partnership for negotiation of agreements (bilateral, regional, international);
- The promotion/enhancement of greater communication; language and ICT training, cultural development; (UNESCO, ITU, CARIFORUM Cultural Centres)
- Review and rationalization of the existing partnerships dealing with HIV/AIDS and other urgent health related issues;
- Development of micro-enterprise and micro-credit as a means of providing opportunities for alternative livelihoods;
- Development and implementation of national integrated development plans as a means of integrating the pillars of sustainable development; and
- Partnership for developing modalities for integrating civil society in the decision making mechanisms including its participation in the formulation of national and regional development strategies.

81. In order to implement effective partnership the meeting underscored the need to pursue actively the mobilization of resources at the national and international levels, through consideration of the following modalities:

- Establishment of a regional sustainability fund. It was felt that this was necessary in order to provide multiple funding options for the implementation on the BPOA. It was considered that a number of modalities can be used to generate the resources;
- The use of economic and fiscal incentives to effect changes in behaviour (e.g. the Barbados solar water heaters initiative);
- Review of the existing elements/modalities for the raising of funds at the national level (Trinidad and Tobago Green Fund, Guyana Green Fund, Protected Areas Conservation Trust in Belize and the use of the resources for the promotion of the sustainable development agenda);
- Polluter Pays Principle;
- Promoting efficiency;
- FDI and facilitation of local capital;
- Environmental entrepreneurships;
- Debt for Nature Swap arrangements; and
- Payment for Environmental Services.

82. The meeting recommended that, in preparation for the International Meeting, the region should consider:

- Developing five case studies of successful collaborative activities in building resilience which could be replicated in other SIDS regions or in dealing with other sustainable development challenges facing Caribbean SIDS;
- Identifying five key or axial areas in which collaborative arrangements could be strengthened or developed to help Caribbean SIDS meet some of the major challenges to their sustainable development.

83. The meeting emphasized the need to complete the National Assessment Reports as soon as possible. It was also agreed that CARICOM, in cooperation with the UWICED, would coordinate the development of a draft Caribbean regional position on the basis of those National Assessment Reports. Delegations also stressed the importance of the inclusion of the views and concerns of the Associate Members of ECLAC. National Assessment Reports should be finalized by the end of October 2003, to facilitate the preparation of the Caribbean regional position, which should be completed and submitted by the end of November 2003.

84. The meeting decided that the structure of the Caribbean regional position, as contained in Annex 2 of this report, would include separate reporting on all the chapters of the BPOA, including new and emerging issues. The Caribbean regional position, along with those of the Pacific and AIMS group, will be an integral contribution to the deliberations of the Inter-regional Preparatory Meeting, which will convene in the Bahamas in January 2004.

85. The meeting was informed of the formation of a regional civil society structure for coordination and implementation of the BPOA. The meeting underscored the importance of civil society participation in the International Meeting, including in the preparatory process.

86. The mobilization of additional financial support for the International Meeting was given high priority. Delegations recommended that all avenues available be utilized to garner international support for the sustainable development of SIDS, and to ensure widest possible participation by the international community in the International Meeting.

87. The meeting recommended that a regional task force, including civil society, be established to further develop, coordinate and facilitate the short and medium term action-oriented recommendations arising out of this preparatory meeting. It further requested that national governments and regional institutions support the work of the task force, and that ECLAC and CARICOM identify funding to assist with the work of this task force, including through the possible provision of a technical officer.

Annex 1
Regional Cultural Development Initiatives

Objective	Approach	Regional Projects
Support human resource and product development	Training & technical assistance in fashion, music, heritage, festivals Emphasis on youth	Strengthen existing regional training institutions to provide the training (Edna Manley College, UWI etc) Directory of institutions & programmes; audit of existing institutions for effectiveness

Support marketing of culture and culturally based production	Regional marketing entity & business support services Regional media entity	Establish a marketing entity or expand an existing one eg. Caribbean Export Establish or strengthen a regional media en ity to promote Caribbean Culture
Protect culture/ realize economic value	Copyright & patents Traditional culture, heritage & indigenous people	Strengthen Caribbean Copyright Link Create a Caribbean TRIPS office Identify & strengthen institution for patents Further develop herbal products for international market
Capacity building	Data collection Institutional strengthening Identify Caribbean personnel in the Diaspora to assist	Support existing regional industry events & trade shows (CME, CFW – CARIFESTA) Conduct an international music marketi[illegible]tudy National studies on cultural industry potential Regional meeting to strengthen government capacity to collect data
Research and Development	Design capacity in craft, furniture, fashion, jewellery etc.	Establish a Caribbean Centre/School of Design or expand an existing institution (eg. Edna Manley College) Strengthen all national performing arts schools & programmes
Venue development	Focus on the performing arts and festivals i.e. indoor & outdoor venues	Project to upgrade selected regional venues, linked with existing successful events (eg. St. Lucia Jazz/ Creole Music Festival) etc.

Long term support	Culture/Film/Venture Capital Fund National budgets to dedicate resources to development of regional fund	Resources to create a new Fund or strengthen an existing one

Annex 2

TEMPLATE FOR CARIBBEAN REGIONAL POSITION FOR BPOA +10

Caribbean Islands

1. SOCIO ECONOMIC CONTEXT: Key characteristics, challenges and responses. • ***Key Characteristics:*** - **Key Challenges:** • **Key Responses:**
2. NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (SD) IN THE REGION
3. PROGRESS MADE & PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BPOA: Sectoral and Cross-Sectoral Areas
3.1 SECTORAL AREAS: Progress Made and Problems Encountered
3.1.1 Climate Change and Sea-Level Rise
3.1.2 Natural and Environmental Disasters
3.1.3 Management of wastes **3.1.4 Coastal and Marine Resources** **3.1.5 Freshwater resources**
3.1.6 Land Resources
3.1.7 Energy resources
3.1.8 Tourism resources
3.1.9 Biodiversity resources
3.1.10 National institutions and administrative capacity **3.1.11 Regional institutions and technical cooperation** **3.1.12 Transport and communication** **3.1.13 Science and technology** **3.1.14 Human resource development** **3.1.15 Implementation, monitoring and review**
3.2 CROSS-SECTORAL AREAS
3.2.1 Financing and Investment for SD
3.2.2 Capacity building and Coordination

4. TRADE, INVESTMENT, CAPACITY BUILDING AND COOPERATION AND THE STATUS OF SIDS VULNERABILITY
5. MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDG's) AND SD IN SIDS.
5.1 Poverty Eradication
5.2 Education and reduction of child mortality
5.3 Gender equality and empowerment of women
5.4 HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
5.5 Environmental Sustainability
5.6 Global Partnership for Development
6 EMERGING CONCERNS AND SPECIAL NEEDS